Rockefeller/CIA Report; Assassinations; Release HW 6/8/75

Today's WxPost story (CIA Data May Be Released), less than 14 inches of type, is entirely inadequate for a story of this nature. It includes less than was on last night's CBS evening TV news, where the medium permits considerably less space. (I have seen no other papers, heard no other broadcasts.)

From this story alone the resort to semantics is obvious, changes have been made and not reported (in what I've seen, anyway) and there is a major flap inside the administration, here only partly reported.

The semantics include Rockefeller's Friday explanation that his 11-man investigative staff "did not have time to do a complete job" on assassinations. (Wods Post's.) First of all, Rockefeller was not limited to his own staff. He did use the FBI at least and extensively. He also had access to files, including the FBI's.

Nowhere is there a distinction between the issue, the CIA's role in foreign assassinations, and the one major investigative commission effort, the totally unnecessary investigation of the utterly spurious claims of the assassination nuts and the more respected self-seekers as they relate to the JFK assassination.

None of this work needed doing. If the commission decided it had to take note of these clearly irresponsible claims, all it needed was already done and on file. The extreme to which it went is illustrated by the quest for Ruby strippers. They cannot possibly have any knowledge within this commission's responsibilities.

The Report is here described as of 299 pages. Earlier descriptions are of a much longer report and the pictures are of a much thicker one. The 80-90- pages here reported to have been deleted do not make for accurate arithmetic. If as I suspect what was printed, bound and given to Ford is page proofs (forgetting other accounts of a two-volume report), unless it was on fairly heavy paper the pictures indicate a larger volume. Or, there is a possibility of other deletions. The thickness of the paper and the dependability of reporters' sources qualify this. It may not be correct.

One graf refers to "an 80-~~90~~ to-90 page report written by commission Executive Director David Belin and not raw investigative files as Nessen said on Friday." It refers to "assassination materials," not otherwise described.

Clearly this was not originally a separate report and if it was separated from the Report, certain if the figures reported are correct only in general, the situation is quite different than here reported.

If the President and his staff are to be adequately informed there is a need for them to have access to whatever is encompassed by "raw investigative files." There is every reason for them to have both the text and the basis for it.

There is no certain basis for deciding whether these "assassination materials" include domestic, the commission's original mandate. But I can't imagine the one known investigation not being included; I can t imagine Belin omitting it, given his psychopathic involvement, his needs and Ford's; and I can't easily imagine its omission with all the points to be scored for both and the executive agencies from the openings provided by the nuts and self-seekers except that it was grossly excessive and constituted an overt attack on the Kennedys, a dangerous political ploy everything I know about Belin tells me he would regard as necessary and proper.

That Belin himself would write this with all he had to do is in itself exceptional and a further measure of his emotional involvement. He had too many other responsibilities. The boss never does this kind of thing. That is why he has others. That Belin would come up with what could be a political liability for Ford I would expect. While it is not essential, I also believe that his staff rather than Ford got scared over this, probably before Ford saw anything or had it adequately communicated to him. Moreover, I would expect his view to be close to Belin's. He has unrecognized problems other than from his having been a ~~xxxxx~~ member of the Warren Commission.

The amount of detail work required to draft so long a section or report ought be

much more than Belin could find and still run the commission and its staff and serves the presumed needs of the members.

This entire affair makes me wonder how active the members have been in the commission's day-to-day work and especially in the drafting of the Report. They are all in varying degrees otherwise busy. Some, especially Griswold, I'd expect to wave red flags over what Belin would write on this. Yet it appears that he did write it nonetheless.

If his personal involvement was not clear to the members prior to the writing of the Report they would have had to have had little to do with him or be dense and insensitive.

Unless what I can't conceive to be possible, Belin ignored what he would regard as the possibilities delivered to him by the irrationalities only initiated by Dick Gregory.

There appears to be no reason for Belin to draft the part of the Report dealing with foreign assassinations. He has no special knowledge of them.

What "raw investigative files" could there be dealing with foreign assassinations? Besides testimony and news reports, how many non-CIA sources could there be on this? I think reference is to the FBI's and commission staff work on the nutty stuff. If so, then added dangers are presented. Sophisticated Member of Congress and some of the press would understand this was not really part of any proper Commission function and would interpret it as a Belin/Ford misuse of the commission and public funds for personal and political reasons. I would also expect the White House staff to spot this, whether or not Nessen was cued in. I think it probable that he'd have been excluded by a special "need to know" interpretation that would be closer to what the spooks call detachment. If he did not know he could neither respond nor volunteer. What mistakes he'd make could be anticipated to mean less trouble than those he did, which could also be expected. Those he did make, while embarrassing, are less so than disclosure of Belin's probable irrationality and its political thrust.

There remains the possibility that with the Church committee to continue for some time there was concern about an inadequate Rockefeller Report. I donot believe this concern would predominate or that it was the deciding factor in the withholding.

It is easily explained as inevitable in a rush job the main purpose of which was to give the President as fast as understanding as possible. It is covered by the fact that in time he would have all that the committee and perhaps other developed.

Moreover, there was immediate political benefit from prompt release of the Report, no matter how inadequate it might be on the CIA in general. It would have relieved pressures, given time and relief to the executive agencies and the White House and its inadwquacies could be explained in terms of time pressures and the expected added results to come from longer investigations.

The Rockefeller/Commission/Ford record indicates this would not be the decisive consideration. The political and angled leaks were extensive, dishonest and did succeed in their propaganda intent. They cannot be nullified. No flaw in the Report could have the effect of undoing this political accomplishment. Except in this one area, where the effect would be other than to diminish that misuse. It would be to bring criticism on Ford and his honchos in their political adventures in the guise of a commission inquiry.

Last night Dan Schorr reported that there was an impassioned fight by Belin and that he lost. Schorr could not have made this up. (Belin is more dispensible than Ford, Rockefeller, etc.) One of the possible interpretations is that someone is preparing for confrontation with the reality as I project it, the misuse of power and authority with regard to the JFK assassination and the overt anti-Kennedy campaign with regard to foreign plots.

Suggestions, criticism and other reporting solicited.